

an old general quelling a mutiny, he rode alone across the square, leaving his followers huddled together round Tyler's body. * I am your leader,' he said to the rebels. The sight of the beautiful child, whose good intentions towards them they had not yet learnt to distrust, riding up to them with quiet confidence, at once disarmed the mob, which had neither leader nor plan. Richard then rode back to his advisers, and it was arranged that he should himself lead the rebels out into the country, while his followers went back into the city to raise forces. To trust himself away from his friends for an indefinite period, in the midst of lawless men whose whim might at any moment be changed by discovering that they were tricked, was an act of courage at least as great as that which he had just performed. But Richard went through his part to perfection, and led the clamorous band out into the meadow where the ruins of St. John's Hospital of Clerkenwell still smouldered ¹ (*map*, p. 228),

Meanwhile the Mayor had ridden post-haste back into the city, and arrayed the fighting force of the wards with all possible speed. Many loyal citizens had for days been ready armed,² but no opportunity had yet been afforded to mobilise them on account of the presence of the mob in the streets. Now all opposition in the city itself was overcome. The two rebel aldermen, Sybyle and Horn, attempted to persuade the citizens to man the walls instead of marching to the relief of the King. They stated that he had already been slain and that succour would be too late. But they were nowhere believed, and their attempt to close Aldersgate, and so cut off the communication of the city with Smithfield, completely failed.³ The burghers marched out by the north-west gates under the command of Sir Eobert Knolles, who had also his own private regiment of soldiers. The rebels in Clerkenwell fields were skilfully and rapidly surrounded.

Meanwhile the Mayor went to look for Wat Tyler, and was surprised to find that he was no longer lying on the ground in Smithfield Place. He had been carried into St. Bartholomew's close by, either dead or dying; Walworth dragged him into

¹ *H. ft.*, 520.

² Froiss., ii. 46P

» *C. R. R.*, 488, Bex.

6. (R6v. 194, 197).